

MINUTES OF PARKLANDS PATIENT FORUM MEETING

HELD WEDNESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2020

7.00 pm VIRTUAL MEETING

WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Chair opened the meeting. Mandy advised she had been contacted by Alicia who has made the decision to step down from the forum. Mandy has sent an email thanking her for her input and support over the years. This was echoed by the group.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Agreed.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None

STAFFING

Mandy advised that Sue, Practice Nurse, will be retiring at Christmas. She has been with us for many years and feels the time is right to spend more time with her family, especially her grandchildren. Sue is a trained asthma nurse, so there were initially concerns as to how she would be replaced. However, two further Nurses have been recruited. Laura, will join us in January 2021. She is an experienced treatment room nurse who specialises in COPD and asthma. She will also be completing a further advanced asthma training diploma. Edyta joins us later this month. She is an experienced treatment room nurse, who specialises in female health and is fully trained in contraceptive implant procedures.

The practice has also recruited a further receptionist, who joined the team at the end of September. Leanne is settling into her role and is undergoing training.

FLU CLINICS

It has been necessary to run our flu clinics in a different way this year, due to the current pandemic. We held a walk through clinic outside in September for our patients aged 65 years and over. This was a great success. It was a warm, sunny day and the clinic ran very efficiently via a marquee in the staff parking area. We were cautious and spaced out appointments, so there were no queues, but we could have vaccinated more patients per hour without it being busy.

As the weather turned colder we felt it wouldn't be appropriate to hold clinics outdoors. We decided to hold the clinics on Saturdays and operate a one way system through the practice - in through the main entrance and exit via the side door. This worked very well and most of our 50-64 year old patients and those in an at risk group were vaccinated in these clinics. We also held some daytime and evening clinics for those patients unable to attend at the weekend. These were held in a consulting room with it's own entrance/exit door, to ensure social distancing from patients entering the building for other appointments.

The practice also held flu clinics for children and young adults. After asking parents in our childhood immunisation clinics their preference of days/times, these clinics were held late afternoon/early evening.

Surveys carried out gave 100% positive feedback for the way the flu clinics were run and 100% of patients confirmed they felt safe with adequate social distancing in place and staff in PPE appropriate to their role.

Car Parking Marshalls were also on hand to advise patients where to park and the procedure for entering and exiting the building. These were mostly members of the Rushden and Diamonds Walking Football Group, who kindly gave up their free time and were rewarded with lots of praise and positive feedback.

Due to the success of the clinics, we will certainly consider operating flu clinics in the same way in the future.

WAITING ROOM FLOORING & CHAIRS

Mandy updated the forum on the latest measures taken by the practice during the pandemic for infection control purposes. During the summer months we had the flooring to two GP consulting rooms replaced with clinical vinyl, We also created an "isolation room" – a room just off the reception foyer (previously our "interview room"). We have now had the carpet in the foyer and waiting room removed and replaced with vinyl, as well as purchasing some extra chairs, which can be wiped.

We are limiting the number of patients allowed in the waiting room at any one time. The area has been marked out with points 2m apart. We are reserving the waiting room for those patients with poor mobility, the elderly or those walking to their appointments. Other patients are asked to wait in their cars until the clinician collects them.

COVID VACCINATION

The practice is a member of the East Northants Primary Care Network (PCN) Hub and will be part of the COVID vaccination programme. Vaccination is due to start this month. Patients from Parklands, Harborough Field Surgery, Rushden Medical Centre, Higham Ferrers Surgery and Spinneybrook (Irthlingborough) will be offered appointments at Harborough Field Surgery (which is the PCN Hub).

Patients from The Cottons Medical Centre, Marshall's Road Surgery (Raunds) and The Meadows Surgery (Thrapston) will be offered appointments at Nene Valley Surgery, in Thrapston.

Our team will be doing shifts at Harborough Field Surgery to administer the Pfizer vaccine. There will be daytime, evening and weekend appointments available. Patients need to remain in the waiting room for 15 minutes after receiving this vaccine. It arrives frozen and needs to be stored at specific temperatures and reconstituted, making it impossible to transport and provide any clinics from Parklands. It is hoped once we receive notification of delivery of the AstraZeneca vaccine, we will be able to hold some sessions at Parklands.

If any of the forum would like to volunteer to help at clinics, please let Mandy know. We will have a team of volunteer Car Parking Marshalls and also volunteers inside the building at Harborough Field Surgery to direct patients to vaccination rooms, the exit and to antibac wipe the chairs, after each use.

DIFFICULT PATIENTS

Mandy reported that, unfortunately, of late our reception team have been experiencing a high volume of verbal abuse from patients. This is not in the form of complaints or criticism about the surgery or the way we are operating and seems to come from the community being generally frustrated with the pandemic in general. As a practice, we do understand that everyone is currently exasperated with the situation the pandemic puts us in. Mandy explained she has been very proud of the reception team who have remained calm and professional throughout and remain committed to helping patients to the best of their ability.

LIST CLOSURE

Mandy discussed with the forum the possibility of making an application to the Clinical Commissioning Group to close our list for 9 months. Our patient list has grown to over 13,500 patients and we are currently receiving a high demand to join our list. It could be feasible to remain open to patients who move to the Rushden area with no registered with GP, but not to those wishing to change practice.

The forum suggested that more patients registering would put a strain on the existing services provided. Retaining the excellent service currently provided, together with a safe level of working for all staff should be a priority. The forum were fully in support of an application to close the list. They felt that the main priority should be for the practice to concentrate on providing the same level of service to existing patients.

DID NOT ATTEND

The practice is still experiencing a number of patients who book telephone calls with the GP, then fail to answer their phone. The GP will always call the patient twice, leaving around 15 minutes between each call. A text will then be sent to the patient advising if they still require medical assistance, to call and book a further appointment. There were 44 patients who failed to answer calls in the last quarter.

Not attending hasn't been an issue with patients attending nurse appointments or for appointments with our Nurse Practitioners and GPs where they have been spoken to initially and given a time slot to come in that day.

COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS

The practice has received many compliments for the way the flu clinics were managed. We've also had many thank you cards and much positive feedback from patients with regards to our change in procedures to keep patients safe during the pandemic. There have been no written complaints and minimal verbal complaints to the Practice Manager.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 7.30pm, virtual meeting, Mandy to send link.